

Homeland Security Advisory System

The Homeland Security Advisory System is a U.S. Government system designed to provide a comprehensive means to disseminate information regarding the risk of terrorist acts to federal, state, and local authorities and to the American people. This system provides warnings in the form of a set of graduated “Threat Conditions” that increase as the risk of the threat increases. At each threat condition, federal departments and agencies would implement a corresponding set of “Protective Measures” to further reduce vulnerability or increase response capability during a period of heightened alert.

Although the Homeland Security Advisory System is binding on the executive branch, it is voluntary to other levels of government and the private sector. There are five threat conditions, each identified by a description and corresponding color.

The greater the risk of a terrorist attack, the higher the threat condition. Risk includes both the probability of an attack occurring and its potential gravity.

Threat conditions are assigned by the Attorney General in consultation with the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security. Threat conditions may be assigned for the entire nation, or they may be set for a particular geographic area or industrial sector. Assigned threat conditions will be reviewed at regular intervals to determine whether adjustments are warranted.

Threat Conditions and Associated Protective Measures

There is always a risk of a terrorist threat. Each threat condition assigns a level of alert appropriate to the increasing risk of terrorist attacks.

Low Condition (Green). This condition is declared when there is a low risk of terrorist attacks.

Guarded Condition (Blue). This condition is declared when there is a general risk of terrorist attacks.

Elevated Condition (Yellow). An Elevated Condition is declared when there is a significant risk of terrorist attacks.

High Condition (Orange). A High Condition is declared when there is a high risk of terrorist attacks.

Severe Condition (Red). A Severe Condition reflects a severe risk of terrorist attacks.

Recommended Actions

Attached are links for recommended protective measures that may be taken to the various threat conditions. Recommendations are specific to each of the five levels of threat conditions. There are specific recommendations for individuals, families and businesses.